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The allusion to *abadejo* in one of the passages quoted above recalls the meal at the inn when Don Quijote partook of this unappetizing salted fish. It was apparently always served soaking in water. Just as *vaca* is one of the most undesirable kinds of meat, so the *abadejo* is the worst possible form of fish. Tirso, Calderón, and Moreto all humorously compare people who have received a ducking to soaking *abadejos*.<sup>32</sup> The reader will recall how Don Quijote was misled by the host's designation of this fish as *truchuela* and fancied himself to be eating trout (*trucha*). Several allusions in Tirso's writings suggest a similar play on words. Cf. *La dama del olivar* :

Deje villanas groseras  
de sayal y de burriel,  
que no es bien coma truchuela  
quien truchas puedo comer.<sup>33</sup>

Cf. also *Tan largo me lo fáiis* :

DON JUAN.

¿Véndese siempre por trucha?

MARQUES.

Ya se da por abadejo.<sup>34</sup>

Don Quijote's encounter with the lion (Part II, Chap. xvii), is commonly thought to have been suggested by certain passages in the romances of chivalry. No very close analogy has been suggested. It is possible, though by no means certain, that Cervantes may be indebted to Bandello for this idea. *Novella xlix of Parte seconda* offers a few parallels. The story is entitled : *Clemenza d'un liono verso una giovanetta, che gli levò un cane fuor degli unghioni, senza ricever nocumento alcuno*. The story has to do with a captive lion which is being conveyed in a cage from Germany to Bohemia. A servant girl carelessly lets her mistress's pet dog enter the lion's cage where the lion captures and holds it without harming it. The servant boldly approaches the lion and rescues the dog without harm to herself. The lion, rendered gentle by captivity, offers not the slightest resistance. The points of similarity are : the

method by which the lion is transported ; the boldness of the servant's approach ; and the meekness of the animal.<sup>35</sup>

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### THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR AND THE FRITHIOF SAGA.

During the years 1838-1840 Longfellow's mind was frequently occupied with the thought of writing some ballads or a heroic poem on the discovery of America by the Norsemen. The first mention of the fact is found in a journal entry for May 3, 1838 :—"I have been looking at the old Northern Sagas, and thinking of a series of ballads or a romantic poem on the deeds of the first bold viking who crossed to this western world with storm-spirits and devil-machinery under water."—Early the next year a skeleton was unearthed near Fall River, Mass., clad in broken and corroded armor. Hearing of this,<sup>1</sup> Longfellow went there to see it, when the thought occurred to him "of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport." Soon after this,<sup>2</sup> he mentions a visit paid him by his friend Felton, and says :—"Told him of my plan of a heroic poem on the Discovery of America by the Northmen, in which the Round Tower at Newport and the Skeleton in Armour have a part to play." A few months later,<sup>3</sup> he speaks of it again. In the meantime<sup>4</sup> he intended to publish another poem on a Scandinavian subject, *Hakon Jarl*, but of this only the title has come down to us. For about a year we hear nothing of his *Skeleton in Armour*, but on December 13, 1840, he writes to his father :—"Have written a translation of a German ballad, and prepared for the press another original ballad, which has been

<sup>35</sup> A similar incident is to be found in Gaspar Mercader's *El prado de Valencia* (ed. Henri Mérimée, Toulouse, 1907), p. 134. The idea of an encounter with a captive lion appears, of course, in the various versions of the knight and the glove story.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the prefatory note to the *Skeleton in Armour* in the volume of *Ballads and Other Poems*, published in Boston, 1842.

<sup>2</sup> May 24, 1839.

<sup>3</sup> December 17, 1839.

<sup>4</sup> Compare his Diary for September 17, 1839.

<sup>32</sup> Tirso, *Hueria de Juan Fernández*, p. 633c ; Calderón, *Lances de amor y fortuna*, Vol. I, p. 43c ; Moreto, *Antíoco y Seleuco*, p. 39a.

<sup>33</sup> Cotarelo y Mori, Vol. II, p. 212b.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 668b.

lying by me for some time. It is called *The Skeleton in Armour*, and is connected with the old Round Tower at Newport. This skeleton really exists. It was dug up near Fall River, where I saw it some two years ago. I suppose it to be the remains of one of the old Northern sea-rovers, who came to this country in the tenth century. Of course I make the tradition myself; and I think I have succeeded in giving the whole a Northern air." One week after this letter was written, he mentions the poem again, admitting that he is "very well satisfied with it" and that he considers it "striking and perhaps unique in conception."

Most of Longfellow's readers are doubtless willing to subscribe to his own words regarding the merits of the poem. One of his biographers<sup>5</sup> even goes so far in his praise of the ballad as to pronounce it "the most purely imaginative, the strongest and the most artistically executed of all his poetic conceptions." But while it may be true that the *Skeleton in Armour* really does excel in vigor and artistic finish, there are ample reasons for questioning whether it should be called a purely imaginative production. The fact that the author mentions the thought of a poem on the discovery of America by the Norsemen as having occurred to him after a perusal of the Norse Sagas, indicates that from the very first he intended to base the ballad on one of them, and hence could have no intention of making it purely imaginative. The additional fact that he referred to it from time to time for more than two years prior to his mention of it in its final form, shows that it was composed only after long and careful deliberation. In the course of these two years he had doubtless made a diligent study of various old Sagas from the North and found that Tegnér's *Frithiof Saga* was the one from which he could best catch the Northern spirit, in order to give the ballad "a Northern air," as he expresses it.

Longfellow's first acquaintance with the writings of Tegnér and other Swedish poets dates from the summer of 1835, when he spent the months of July and August in Sweden. Even at this early date, he says of Tegnér:—"Sweden has one great

poet and only one. That is Tegnér, Bishop of Wexiö, who is still living. His noblest work is 'Frithiof's Saga,' a heroic poem, founded on an old tradition." From that time on, the American poet showed a keen interest in the Swedish language and literature. With reference to a course of lectures which he was to deliver in Harvard college soon after his return to America, he writes to a friend:—"In this course something of the Danish and Swedish (the new feathers in my cap) is to be mingled." Some three months later,<sup>7</sup> he sent a list of twelve lectures to his father, and according to this list two of the twelve were to be on Swedish Literature. Meanwhile he had also announced two articles for the July number of the *North American Review* of that year, "one on the 'Legend of Frithiof,' a Swedish poem."<sup>8</sup>

In this article Longfellow expresses his admiration for Tegnér in the most glowing terms:—"Tegnér stands foremost among the poets of Sweden; a man of grand and gorgeous imagination, and poetic genius of a high order," etc. The *Frithiof Saga* as a whole he pronounces "one of the most remarkable productions of the age," and his comments on the individual cantos are very favorable, for example:—"This canto is conceived and executed in a truly Homeric spirit," or—"The whole ballad is full of grace and poetic beauty." These are only a few of the many remarks which tend to show what profound impressions the *Frithiof Saga* must have made on Longfellow's mind. Whether such impressions later resulted in literary influence<sup>9</sup> may be seen from a comparison of the *Saga* and the *Skeleton in Armour*. In the comparison which follows here, the situations in the *Saga* have been referred to only in so far as some underlying thought in each of them is paralleled by a similar thought in the *Skeleton in Armour*.

In the first canto of the *Frithiof Saga* we are told that even as a young boy Frithiof would rob

<sup>5</sup> G. W. Green, in a letter dated February 1, 1837.

<sup>7</sup> May 12, 1837.

<sup>8</sup> Compare the letter to his father, March 22, 1837.

<sup>9</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the question of influence on Longfellow from Tegnér's writings and other Swedish sources, the writer begs leave to refer to his article, "Is Longfellow's 'Evangeline' a Product of Swedish Influence?" in *Poet Lore*, Vol. xix, No. iii.

<sup>6</sup> F. H. Underwood, *Henry W. Longfellow*, Boston, 1882, page 91.

the *eagle's nest* and carry away its young. In some of the later cantos the *falcon* is frequently mentioned as his most faithful companion.

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 4):

"Far in the Northern Land,  
By the wild Baltic's strand,  
I, with my childish hand,  
Tamed the *ger-falcon*."

Canto 18 tells of how King Ring, against the advice of Frithiof, undertakes to drive with his queen over the *thin ice of a lake*. Fired by the heedlessness of the king, Frithiof quickly *puts on his skates* and follows the two in the sled. Very soon the ice begins to break under the royal couple, when Frithiof rushes forward and rescues them.

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 4):

"And with my *skates fast-bound*,  
Skimmed the *half-frozen sound*,  
That the poor whimpering hound  
Trembled to walk on."

The *Saga* contains the following short reference to Frithiof's remarkable strength and daring as a huntsman (canto 1—Holcomb's translation):

"Young Frithiof followed oft the chase,  
Which led to many a fearful place;  
With neither spear nor lance defended  
The wild bear's life he quickly ended."

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 5):

"Oft to his frozen lair  
Tracked I the grizzly bear."

After Frithiof had been the indirect cause of the burning of Balder's temple, he fled from his country and spent three years of exile in *marauding expeditions*. For these expeditions he framed a *code of laws* which his men were to observe. By one of its decrees they were *ordered* to engage at once the crew of any viking-ship that might be sighted, and every man was *pledged to fight to the last*.

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 6):

"But when I older grew,  
Joining a corsair's crew,  
O'er the dark sea I flew  
With the marauders.  
Wild was the life we led;  
Many the souls that sped;  
Many the hearts that bled  
By our stern orders."

Canto 11 of the *Saga* tells of the royal entertainment accorded to Frithiof at the home of Earl Angantyr. The last stanza of the canto runs as follows (Longfellow's translation):

"Whilst *jest and social joys engage*,  
Swift the *night-watches fled*;  
Freighted with mirth, not fraught with rage,  
The golden goblet sped;  
A health to Angantyr they shout,  
At the close of each regale.  
And Frithiof wears the winter out,  
Ere swells Ellida's sail."

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 7):

"Many a wassail-bout  
Wore the long winter out;  
Often our midnight shout  
Set the cocks crowing,  
As we the Berserk's tale  
Measured in cups of ale,  
Draining the oaken pail,  
Filled to o'erflowing."

The seventh canto of the *Frithiof Saga* describes the betrothal of Frithiof and Ingeborg as taking place in the temple of Balder, which was situated in a *grove*, on a clearing called "*Baldershage*." At the time, Ingeborg is *afraid* that they have provoked the wrath of the god by meeting in his temple. But Frithiof dispels her fears by assuring her that Balder, the god of love, can only be pleased to receive as a sacred offering the pure love and fidelity of their hearts. Hereupon the two lovers kneel before the altar and plight their *troth*.

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 9):

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,  
Yielding, yet half afraid,  
And in the forest's shade  
Our vows were plighted."

In the same canto (7) in which the pledge of troth between the lovers is described, Frithiof speaks of the joys that would be his if he and Ingeborg were permitted to go to Valhalla together. As one of the many acts of love which he there would do for her delight he would *build her a bower or cottage by the sea*.

Compare *Skeleton in Armour* (stanza 17):

"There for my lady's bower  
Built I the lofty tower,  
Which, to this very hour,  
Stands looking seaward."

In giving a list of such cases, I mention the page of occurrence of all instances previous to the one commented on, which is in italics at the end of each series. It is a question of mere definition in the case of *biltog* (pp. 59, 5 ; 145, 4 ; *173, 2*), *ungersven* (19, 4 ; *91, 3*), *till slut* (27 ; 28 ; 33, 4 ; *87, 2v*), *id* (56, 2 ; *60*), *på en gång* (81, 1 ; *81, 2*), *ber om* (45, 1 ; 85, 1 ; 85, 3 ; *120, 2*), *hvarst helst* (66, 4 ; 69, 2 ; *138, 5*), *på lif och död* (64, 1 ; *103, 3*), *i vinter* (92, 3 ; *132, 1*), *om julen* (24 ; *123, 1*), *om våren* (32, 2) ; cf. *om hösten* (defined p. 86, 2), *det fins* (p. 7, 2 and 3, etc. ; *60*). If the student knew the meaning of these expressions the first time, there seems little occasion for defining them later.